

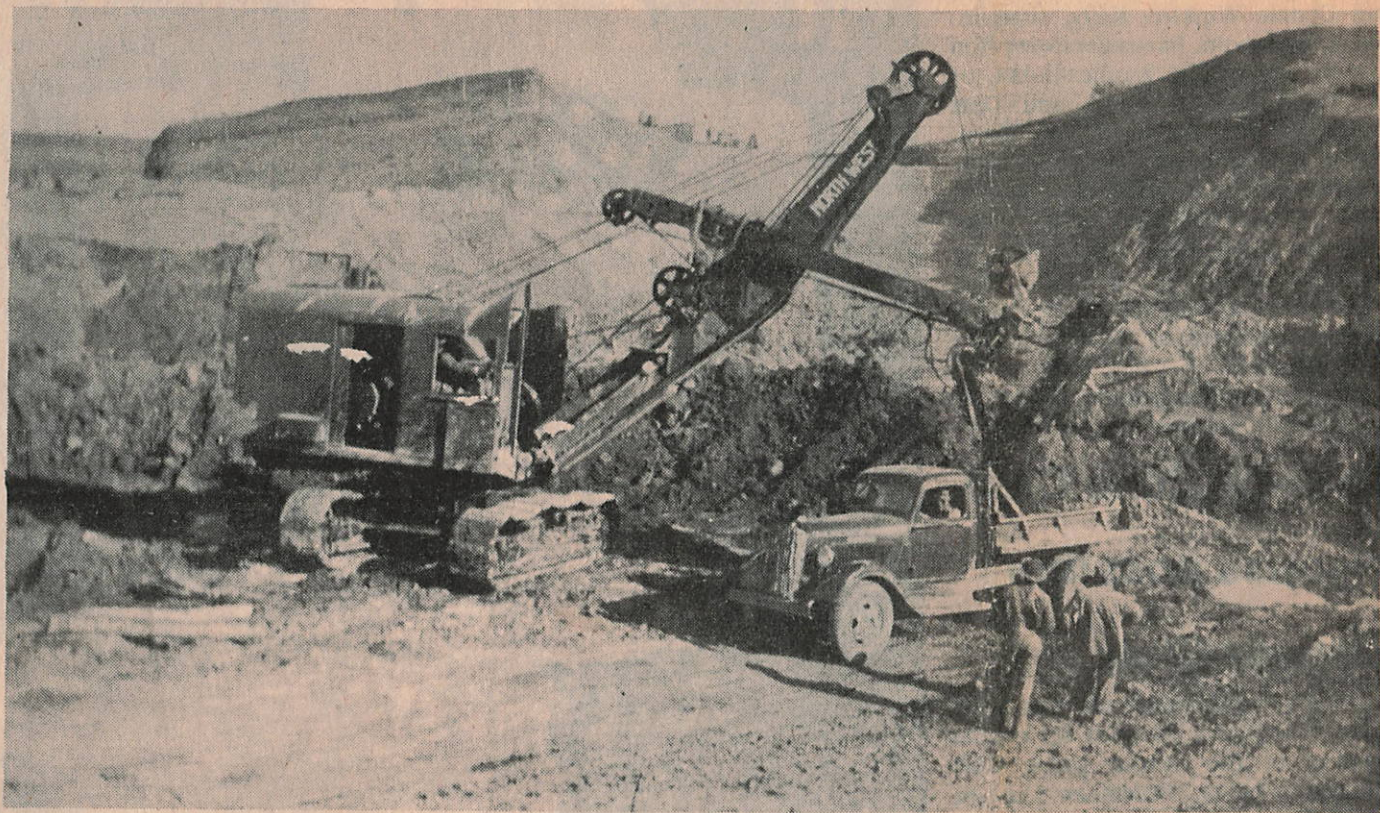
75 years ago

The Courier-Tribune

7-15-09

A year of negotiation on the part of the Board of Nemaha county commissioners and the Lake-Park committee is considered to have culminated successfully Saturday when Aug. Kramer, chairman of the commissioners, received letters from Senator George McGill and Senator Arthur Capper, enclosing official approval for a C.C.C. camp of 200 men. The first camp, expected to begin work almost at once, is to be augmented in October by a second camp of 200.

*Hard work,
sweat,
and muscle
built the
lake*



Where extensive digging was needed, power shovels were used.

"It hardly seems like 50 years ago," Ray Bloom, of Elkhart, Indiana, said this summer.

Bloom was a member of Civilian Conservation Corps Company 2735, one of the two CCC Companies that built Lake Nemaha in 1930's. He visited Seneca during the annual reunion of the company, which was held August 7 in Marysville.

Later, he sent a dozen photographs taken in 1935 and 1936 of the men and machines at work on the lake.

All of the former CCC volunteers

after year, in all kinds of weather, from 1934 until the completion of the project in 1939. Some of them were "mule skinnners," an occupation which no longer exists, except in isolated rural areas.

Others were woodcutters, blacksmiths, truck drivers, painters, scraper operators, cooks, and wheelbarrow pushers.

Most of them are retired now, and they are scattered throughout the United States. But they haven't forgot-



long hours of work that went on year Lake Nemaha.

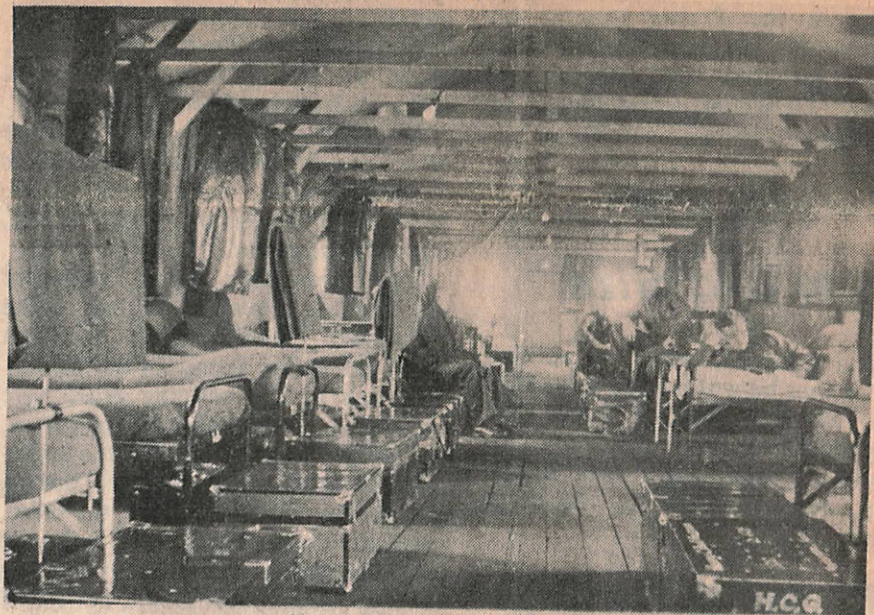


Dirt was handled by trucks and mule-drawn dump wagons.



A shovel brigade works in the puddle trench.

Photos contributed by Ray Bloom



CCC workers relax in one of the barracks.



Shovels ready, workers report for work on the puddle trench.

City will fight lake draining

12-12-83

The Seneca City Council voted Wednesday evening to fight a proposal by the Kansas Fish and Game Department to drain Lake Nemaha.

State Representative Lloyd Polson, (R)-Vermillion, and former State Senator Leslie Droge, Seneca, were present at the meeting to review legislative efforts to save the lake.

"I've been in contact with the Fish and Game Department the past few days," Polson said, "and the Chief of Fisheries called me today. He said the lake will not be closed immediately. They plan to stock the lake for two more years. I've also found out that DOT (the Department of Transportation) has put off plans to build a new bridge at the lake for at least a year."

Polson told the council that he has not yet seen "any sort of concrete proposal" by the Fish and Game Department to remove the spillway, and he doubted that the department could remove the spillway without first seeking federal approval.

"I rather doubt they can take it out," Polson said. "I have a lawyer reviewing the original contract signed by the Fish and Game Department in the 1930's when they took control of the lake. You're not talking about just a fishing lake here. It's also a flood control structure, and there's federal money in it."

Former State Senator Leslie Droge, who actively supported efforts to save the lake when he was a member of the legislature, agreed with Polson's view that the lake serves an important flood control function.

"If it's been preventing downstream floods," Droge said, "I don't see how they can just come in and take it out. If they did, it would have environmental impact, and I don't think they can take the spillway out without first making an environmental impact study."

During the discussion that ensued, council members noted that removal of the lake spillway could result in possible flooding of the city sewer lagoon system as well as businesses and industries which are located east of Seneca near the Nemaha River. Severe flooding of downstream farmlands was

also mentioned as a possible consequence of removing the spillway.

Droge submitted to the council copies of petitions he had received while serving in the legislature.

"These are old petitions," he said, "but I still think that 90 percent of the people in Nemaha County want this lake kept full. I know that the landowners and renters in the downstream areas don't want the spillway removed. I think if the sentiment of the county is made known to the Governor and the legislature, there is a good chance you can save it."

Polson agreed that strong support from Nemaha County citizens would be needed before any possible legislative solution could be proposed.

"The legislature is aware of how the people up here feel about the lake," Polson said. "The problem is how to go about saving it. You've got a state right now that's out of money. You've got a spillway out at the lake that needs to be repaired, and you've got a bridge out there that's gonna fall in one of these days."

"You've also got landowners above the lake who have been experiencing problems because of the lake. There's a lot of siltation up there. Right now, you couldn't get a muskrat under the bridge at Kelly, and the County is concerned about its roads in that area."

"The Fish and Game Department is as perplexed as the rest of us. They don't know what to do about it, either. They've been up here so often they can pronounce 'Nemaha' backwards."

"As a legislator, I want to help solve this problem, but I can't walk on water until you show me where the rocks are."

After further discussion, the council unanimously approved a motion made by Jerry Odum to put the council solidly behind the movement to save the lake. Council members were also in agreement that broad public support would be needed if efforts to save the lake were to be successful.

A public meeting has been scheduled by the Fish and Game Department for December 20 in Seneca for the purpose of hearing comments about the proposal to remove the lake spillway. The meeting will be held at the

2-23-94

Chronology of Lake Nemaha

1934 County voters give approval for a Memorial Park for the Spanish-American War and World War I by passing a bond levy for \$30,000 to finance construction of a 700 acre park with a 350 acre lake.

1935 County voters approve by a 1,388 - 36 count a proposal to give the Memorial Park to the State Fish and Game Commission.

1939 Dam completed and the lake starts filling with water.

1947 The first demands for payment for damages from upstream landowners for overflow and silting are received.

1948 After completing a study of the problem, the Fish and Game Commission negotiated a settlement of damages and acquired overflow and siltation easements from 5 landowners covering 215.72 acres at a cost of \$14,620.

1953 After making numerous complaints of damage, upstream landowners filed a proceeding of Mandamus in Nemaha County District Court, seeking removal of the dam. The case reached the Kansas Supreme Court, which ruled in favor of the Commission.

1964 Following continuing complaints and another engineering study, the decision was made to drain the lake, cut the spillway, and settle with the landowners. The 1965 State legislature rejected funding to make the changes to the dam and spillway and to pay the landowners.

1971 Following the receipt of petitions with over 1,000 signatures, the valve on the lake's spillway was closed, allowing water to again pool behind the dam. The lake was restocked with fish the following year.

1984 The lake's spillway was severely damaged following a 4" downpour over the watershed in June. Downstream, flooding occurred in Seneca as the lake drained.

1985 The Fish and Game Department announced plans to replace the spillway with a "notched wall" to retain some flood control. The department also announced the change of the park's name to the Nemaha Wildlife Area.

1986 In mid-February the K-63 bridge over the Nemaha River was suddenly closed due to safety concerns. Demolition and replacement of the "arch" bridge followed.



The shelter house at old Lake Nemaha now looks out on a jumble of weeds and trash, and the rest of the former park is in a similar condition, a far cry from when the lake and park were a northeast Kansas recreational hotspot.

Meeting on old Lake Nemaha set

Organizer would like to see county War Memorial restored to recreational use

An informational meeting on the future of the old Lake Nemaha area has been set for Wednesday, March 2, at 7:30 PM at the Court-house.

The meeting is being organized by County Clerk Anita Heiman, who said the County Commissioners have been an-

Representatives of the Kansas Department of Wildlife & Parks, the agency in charge of the area, and other interested groups will be in attendance.

Heiman was quick to point out that restoration of the area would not involve fixing the spillway and re-filling the lake. As

some talk about building a small pond on the north side of the lake — away from the Nemaha River channel — but no definite plans have been put forth.

"We just want to see what people want to do with it," she said.

After becoming a wildlife area,

American War and World War I to create the lake and park.

"That was a sizable amount of money to come up with in the middle of the depression," she pointed out.

"I think it's a shame that we have let it go downhill so far. It's

proached several times on the subject.

Restoration of the area — renamed the Nemaha Wildlife Area in 1985 after flooding took out the spillway the year before — was also a priority on a Community Visions Survey taken in Seneca last year, she said.

tion, the lake was the subject of several lawsuits and endless controversy due to upstream flooding.

"That's a dead issue," she said, "What we're looking at is maintaining the area as a park, a place people can go for recreation."

Heiman said there has been

neglect, she said. "It's a real eyesore, and it could be a pretty place." Also, the stone pillars along the Highway 63 dam need repair, she said.

Heiman pointed out that county residents voted in 1934 to spend \$30,000 to establish a memorial park for the Spanish-

Wildlife and Parks officials have said that there is no local support to maintain the area as a park, but Heiman challenges that belief.

"I think the people will support some improvements. It's a chance to maintain something we already have," she said.

Committee to coordinate clean-up of old lake site

The mess at old Lake Nemaha may be cleaned up, following a meeting between the concerned residents and the state agency in charge of the site.

And, the possibility exists that the area could be returned to some form of recreational use.

Ben Streeter and John Bond of the Wildlife and Parks Department told the crowd of around 50 that funds aren't available to clean up the area. But permission could be given for volunteer organizations to work at the lake, they said.

A committee comprised of people interested in the area's future, including area landowners and civic groups will coordinate clean-up efforts with the Wildlife and Parks Department.

That marks a change in policy for the department, Streeter, Region 2 Supervisor, acknowledged. "The philosophies have changed," he said.

Private efforts to mow and work at the site have been stopped

by the agency in previous years, due to the site's designation as a Wildlife Area in 1985.

Those in the crowd complained that the area has been neglected ever since, with standing water, weeds, brush and trash littering the camping and picnic sites of the old lake.

"We can't undo that," Streeter said, "We can only look to the future. We want to use public lands as well as we can."

Streeter pointed out that Kansas has only 1% of it's land available for public recreational use.

The agency has had only a \$2,000 annual budget for the site, Streeter said, and funds will remain tight, as damage caused by last year's floods is repaired.

He noted that 98% of the State Lakes in Kansas were built in the CCC era, and many are facing the same upkeep problems. "There are a lot of Nemahas out there," Streeter said.

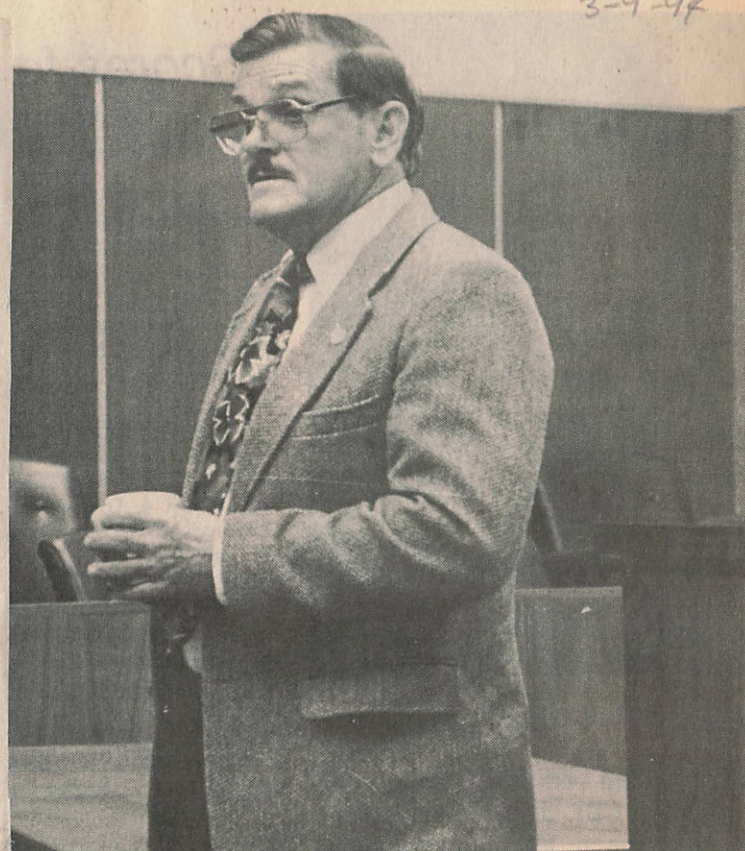
Bond, who is the new Region 2 Public Land Supervisor, said he has worked with public groups that had been successful in reclaiming other neglected sites.

"With our budget, the more public involvement the better," Bond, who will coordinate clean-up of the old lake, said. A special-use permit will need to be granted by his agency before clean-up can start, he said.

The two toured the old lake before the meeting, and noted several problems that need immediate attention, in addition to a general clean-up.

Streeter said the rock work on the shelter house, including the fireplace, was in danger of falling down without repair work. Roads around the site need drainage work, also.

A silt dam at the lake's headwaters is causing water to back up on private property, Bond said. "That's an issue that will have to be addressed."



Lake meeting held—

Ben Streeter, Region 2 Supervisor for the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks spoke at a meeting at the courthouse Wednesday night. Streeter told a crowd that volunteer help would be welcomed in cleaning up the old Lake Nemaha park area, now filled with weeds and trash. See story Page 1.

Letter to the editor—

3-2-94

Button State down on Lake Nemaha

Dear Editor:

I would like to take this opportunity to comment on a recent article in The Courier-Tribune concerning old Lake Nemaha and a March 2 meeting with representatives of the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks.

I thoroughly support any effort of restoring the site for recreational purposes, as evidenced by an unending pursuit of such a goal by the city of Seneca during the years I was mayor. It was an ongoing and continual effort by many, many people in the community. I can assure you old Lake Nemaha had a tremendous economic impact upon the entire community, more than anyone can imagine. So the effort was that much more important along with its recreational benefit.

The state would be the first to admit that, also. Hopes were raised and dashed many times and finally ended in total frustration as the "politics" of it all took over. The Fish and Game Department totally washed their hands of any recreational restoration of the lake despite the overwhelming support of the community.

As you know, the floods of 1993 took an awesome toll on all the major state parks in Kansas, causing a major budget crisis within the Wildlife and Parks Department. This budget crisis has caused the department to go to the legislature for more funds, even proposing to license those 65 years old and older to hunt and fish. This would be a first.

In light of this, we must therefore be realistic and face the facts. It's difficult to believe that Wildlife and Parks will have recreational funds available for the lake when they are so restrained. The department has continually ignored and neglected its obvious responsibility of keeping the site clean and in decent repair. As the owner of the property, they should maintain it properly.

It is my opinion, and that of many others, that our County Commissioners should focus their attention on insisting that the Department of Wildlife and Parks take immediate steps to clean up the old lake property first of all. They shouldn't settle for anything less. After this is completed, plans could be made to explore addi-

tional avenues of recreation for the site.

This should be the main concentration at this time. The condition of the old lake is an eyesore—no doubt a shame and embarrassment for a memorial park built 60 years ago by the people of Nemaha County as a tribute for the Spanish American War and World War I. It is a shame that a state agency has allowed it to lapse into the deterioration that it has.

Once again, I will support any positive effort in restoring some dignity and purpose to a war memorial known as Lake Nemaha.

It is my hope that your undertaking is not an exercise in futility as has often been the case in the past. Thank you for your concern in this matter.

Bob Claas

(former Mayor of Seneca)

P.S. Thank you for your time and consideration.



A bronze plaque once adorned this rock monument at old Lake Nemaha. County officials are seeking pictures of the missing plaque to aid in research on the war memorial.

Pictures of old lake plaque are sought

Pictures of a bronze plaque that once adorned the stone monument at the old Lake Nemaha Park are being sought by organizers of a push to restore recreational use of the area.

The plaque commemorated the lake's construction as a memorial to the soldiers of the Spanish-American War and World War I, said County Clerk Anita Heiman.

The plaque disappeared around the time the lake was first drained in the 1960's, those attending a

meeting on the lake Wednesday night said.

Anyone with a picture that shows the plaque is being urged to send a copy of the picture to the County Clerk's Office, Heiman said.

The plaque could have historical significance if a grant is sought to fund improvements at the site, John Bond, Region 2 Public Land Supervisor for the Kansas Wildlife and Parks Department, said.

5-18-94

Volunteers repair stone fireplace at old lake

Rainy weather canceled the planned road clean-up at old Lake Nemaha, but volunteer workers repaired the stone fireplace in the shelter house on Saturday.

Tom Luckeroth, Luckeroth Masonry, along with Dick Miller, Danny Shump and Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks representative Keith Salmans, repaired the fireplace, said Anita Heiman, who is on the Lake Improvement Committee.

The workers used stone donated by Clarence Lintz, and stone and other supplies donated by the Seneca Lions Club. Refreshments, as well as other materials were also donated.

The Lake Nemaha Improvement Committee met on Tuesday afternoon to determine placement of the ball field area, sand volleyball courts, restrooms, playground site, and other projected improvements.

4-27-94

Clean-up held at Nemaha Lake a success

The first clean-up day for old Lake Nemaha was a success, according to organizers of the Saturday event.

Anita Heiman estimated that twenty-five volunteers showed up for the day, bringing hand tools, chain saws, trucks and strong backs.

She gave special mention to Chadd and Brett Ohlsen, who brought a skid-loader to help out. "That machine did the work of twenty people," Heiman said.

"The progress we made was wonderful," she said. The old ballfield area was cleaned up, shrub growth was cleared, and trees were trimmed.

A sand volleyball court is being planned for the future, and the addition of rest rooms in the long-range plans, Heiman said.



A volunteer helped cut down an old tree at the clean-up day for Lake Nemaha, held last Saturday.

Second clean up day scheduled at old Lake Nemaha

Another work day at old Lake Nemaha has been scheduled for this Saturday, May 14, as volunteers will clear brush from a road that circles through the wildlife area.

The Lake Nemaha Improvement Association, a group of volunteers interested in restoring the former lake site for recreation, camping, family outings and wildlife, is coordinating the work days.

In addition to volunteer help, financial and other assistance is also being recruited, said Association member Anita Heiman. At the last work day, held April 23, food and drink donations were received.

Rock will be needed to resurface the road after the brush is cleared, Heiman said, and the group is accepting donations to pay for the rock.

Some funding, in the form of donations and memorials, has already been received, and is being set aside for specific projects, including repair of the shelter house, construction of horse shoe pits and sand volleyball courts, and the purchase of picnic tables.

Anyone wishing to make a donation can contact Heiman at the County Clerks office, 336-2170.

The lake association has es-

tablished a plan for restoring six areas at the lake, with short and long-term improvements scheduled. Short-term improvements include items the association expects to complete during this year, while long-term projects are expected to take several years to complete.

The selected areas, and some improvements are:

Site 1: General clean up, improve road, restore memorial and plaque, add picnic tables and sand volleyball court. Add rest room facilities, space lighting and water and electricity hook-ups, playground equipment and shower house.

Site 2: Replace road culvert, repair stone fireplace.

Site 3: General clean up, including trimming trees and mowing of grass areas.

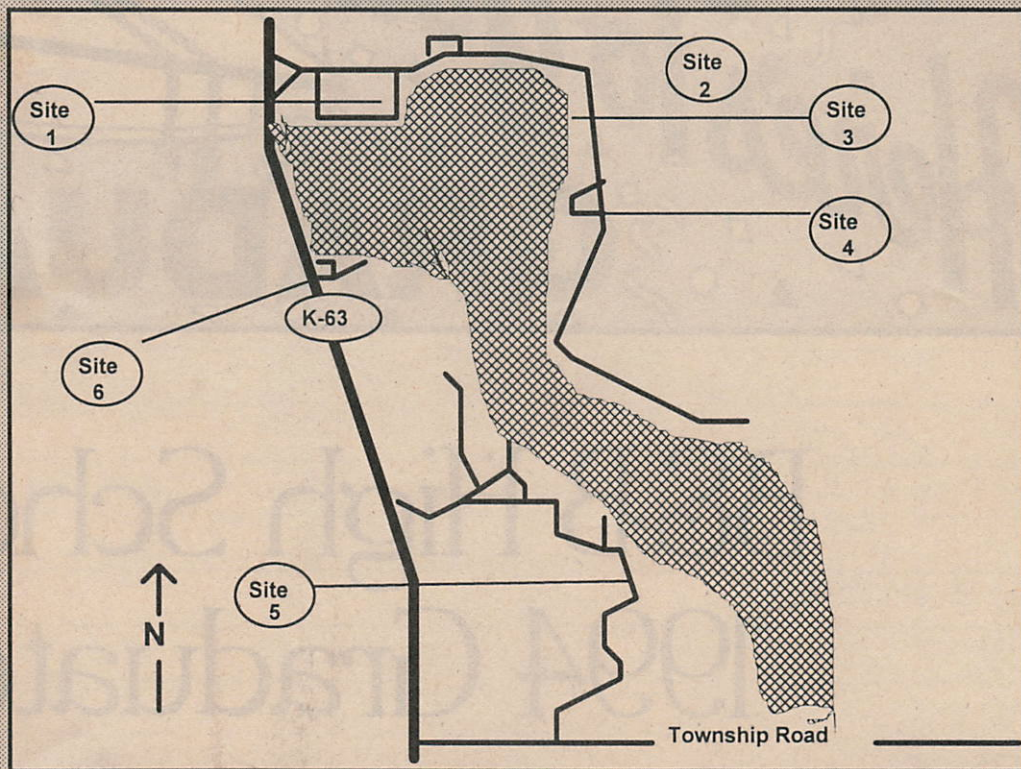
Site 4: Repair and rock circular road, repair shelter house stone fireplace, repair rotted wooden gable ends of shelter house, repair rest rooms, install water, electricity and space lighting.

Site 5: Open road, fix pot-holes and fix drainage problems, re-establish scout camping area.

Site 6: General clean up and add picnic tables to area.

5-11-94

Lake Nemaha Improvement Project



A clean up day set Saturday at old Lake Nemaha will focus on Site 5, a now closed road that provides access to interior portions of the wildlife area. Plans for improving the old lake focus on six areas, with long and short-term improvements planned at each.

Nemaha Lake committee is seeking funds, volunteers

The Nemaha Lake Development Committee has completed the preliminary planning phase for improvements at the site of the old Nemaha County State Lake, located five miles south of Seneca.

Immediate plans call for the re-opening of the scenic drive through the south end of the park, renovation of the shelter house, construction of a ball field and horseshoe and volleyball pits, camp grounds and picnic areas with picnic tables and barbecue grills, general road repairs, camp ground maintenance, and tree clearing.

Future plans include providing water to camp areas, construction of bathrooms, and construction of additional shelter house facilities. The committee is also exploring the possibility of retention of water for fishing ponds and waterfowl habitat with the State of Kansas and Ducks Unlimited.

Volunteers from the community have been working on weekends mowing, cleaning and clearing brush and trees. The committee is now requesting that interested groups adopt areas of the park to ensure continued maintenance and mowing.

The Nemaha Lake area is under the jurisdiction of the Kansas Wildlife and Parks Department. Due to budget restraints, the state is unable to immediately fund the planned improvements and maintenance of the area. The development committee will be submitting a grant application to help cost share the development and improvements with the state, however it could possibly be several years before a grant, if approved, would provide a source of funds.

All persons in the community who desire to make a contribution for project costs can make their donations to the Nemaha

Lake Development Committee, in care of Anita Heiman, P.O. Box 186, Seneca, KS 66538.

Also, a fund has been established with the Seneca Area STEP Foundation for receipt and distribution of funds for this project.

Gifts made to the STEP Foundation are tax deductible and should be forwarded to Paul Boeding, Treasurer of the Seneca Area STEP Foundation, C/O Baileyville State Bank, 611 North 2nd, Seneca, KS 66538.

Contributors to the foundation should specify that the contribution is for the Nemaha Lake Development Project.

All donations of time and money, no matter how small, are greatly appreciated by the Nemaha Lake Development Committee. A fund-raising project is being planned for the near future.

6-22-94



Rains halted planned work at old Lake Nemaha recently, but a crew organized by Lion's Club member Dick Miller repaired stone work inside the shelter house. From left are Danny Shump, Tom Luckeroth and Keith Salmans.

Nemaha Lake group to hold fund-raiser

8-31-94

The Lake Nemaha Improvement Association has been busy working on a grant for the last few months with Wildlife and Parks to do some improvements to the former Lake Nemaha site. These improvements include making a recreation area with picnic tables, shelter houses, horseshoe pit, sand volleyball courts, and ball area. Plans also include developing a shallow lake area and two fishing ponds. The committee has been working since early spring with brush removal and mowing to keep the area looking better.

In conjunction with this effort,

the Lake Improvement committee is planning a fund raiser for Saturday, October 8, at the lake site.

Plans are to have several people and groups on hand to demonstrate their skills and to have a whole hog barbecue at the site. The day will begin at 10:00 a.m. and run until 4:00 p.m. The meal will be served from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

More details will be forthcoming in the next few weeks with information about the day. Mark your calendars now and plan to join in the fun.

Fund raiser for Lake Nemaha set

Tickets are now available for the fund raiser October 8 for the Lake Nemaha Improvement Association. \$5 will get you a barbecue pork sandwich, baked beans, chips and a drink, which will be served from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the former Lake Nemaha site, near the Lions Club cabin. The event is co-sponsored by the Seneca Lions Club.

The day starts at 10:00 a.m. and runs until 4:00 p.m. Diana Lyn Clark, Clark's Saddle and Leather Works, will give two 30-minute leather demonstrations, at 10:00 a.m. and again at 2:00 p.m. At 11:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Ralph

"The Crazy Cowboy" Clark from Vermillion will be telling stories about his cowboy days.

In addition, Martin Armstrong, Havensville, will be demonstrating rope making, the Cedar Bluffs Bowhunters and Black Powder enthusiasts will be having demonstrations throughout the day. There will be a horse shoe pitching contest, hay rack ride and buggy rides, a local band will be providing music, and Kansas Wildlife and Parks will have an exhibit available, and maps showing the proposed improvements to be made.

The Lake Association members are anxious for everyone to attend

the fund raiser and see all the improvements that have already been done at the lake site. The group had two work days this year. Brush and weeds and dead trees have been removed from the first site, which is the camping area. In addition the group worked to clear brush from the south road that encircles the lake and worked on getting it graded, and is working on acquiring enough rock to keep it rocked. The Association also purchased an 8 foot gate which will be closed during hunting season to allow the wildlife area to be used for hunting.

Monies used from the fund raiser will help in the maintenance

of the area and also help in matching funds for a grant they are working on to fund a recreational area. The recreational area will include picnic tables, grills, another shelter house, camping area, a horse shoe pitching area, volleyball pit, swing sets, and a ball area. Additional plans include putting two small fishing ponds in the area, and a shallow lake area.

"The Lake Nemaha Improvement Association members hope you will be able to join us for the fun day we have planned," said member Anita Heiman. "If you cannot make it, donations for the fund raiser are gratefully accepted."

Tickets for the event are available at Schendel Pest Control, the County Clerk's office, Nemaha County Extension, or from committee members: Chairman Anita Heiman, Linda Brannan, Bill Brannan, Don Macke, Eldon Schwant, Dick Miller, Jim Krotzinger, Les Droge, Albert Winkler, David Key and Frank Heiman.



Buggy rides offered by Dr. Norman Berkley were one of the activities enjoyed at the Lake Nemaha Improvement Association's fund raiser on Saturday.

Lake event raises \$2,200

Proposal to build new water retaining structure is unveiled

The fund raiser held by the Lake Nemaha Improvement Association on Saturday was a great success, say organizers, both in terms of money raised and increased public awareness of the group's projects.

\$2,200 was raised through a barbecue dinner and assorted activities. That money will be used for planned improvements at the lake, including a volleyball area, a new shelter house, and road maintenance.

Those that attended the event, estimated at 350, saw first hand some of the work that has already been completed at the former lake. Brush has been cleared, grass and weeds mowed, and roads improved by volunteer labor.

"A lot of people were really impressed with the amount of work we have already accomplished," said Linda Brannan, who is on the association's committee.

Plans were also unveiled for building a small water retention structure on the north side of the former lake's bed. The structure would hold water for recreational use and wildlife habitat.

Two committee members, Bill Brannan and Anita Heiman, are going to present proposals for the structure at an upcoming Kansas Wildlife and Parks Board of Directors meeting in Wichita.

Two proposals are being considered, Heiman said. Neither would involve the Nemaha River channel, which flows on the south side of the original lake bed.

Saturday's event helped showcase the variety of activities the area could support, noted Heiman. The event had a family atmosphere, with pony and hayrack rides, leather-working and rope-making demonstrations, story-telling, caramel popcorn, and other activities.

"I was surprised how many people came out and really enjoyed the whole day," Heiman said.

The enthusiasm of those interested in seeing some form of recreational use at the site was noted by Wildlife and Parks District Officer John Bond and Area Field Officer Keith Salmans who were on hand, and said they were impressed with the support.



Under a plan proposed by the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, a new dam could be built to back water up on a portion of the former Lake Nemaha. Part of the original dam would also be used.

Lake Nemaha group hears plan to build new dam, lake

Members of the Lake Nemaha Improvement Association heard some good news at their last meeting, with the unveiling of a plan to construct a new, 161-acre lake in the original lake bed.

Also, test results were received on two wells the group would like to use for water supply at the proposed lake park, and the water was found to be fine for drinking purposes.

Keith Salmans, Area Manager for Kansas Wildlife & Parks, presented the lake plan, which was prepared by KWP Project Engineer Russell LaForce.

It calls for building a 6,300-foot long earth-fill dam to hold a small lake in the north bed of the original Lake Nemaha. The dam and lake would not affect the

Nemaha River, which runs on the south side of the lake bed.

The proposal shows a lake with a maximum depth of 12 feet, and a dam that would be 19 feet high. A spillway would be located at the south-east end of the dam.

The estimated total cost would be \$588,219, with the major cost, \$235,723, for building the dam. 5000 ton of rip rap — needed to prevent erosion of the dam — adds \$136,400. The plan also calls for removal of 45,675 cubic yards of silt from the lake bed at a cost of \$42,561.

The next step on the project will be obtaining a permit from Kansas Division of Water Resources, group chairman Anita Heiman said. After the permit is obtained the group can start

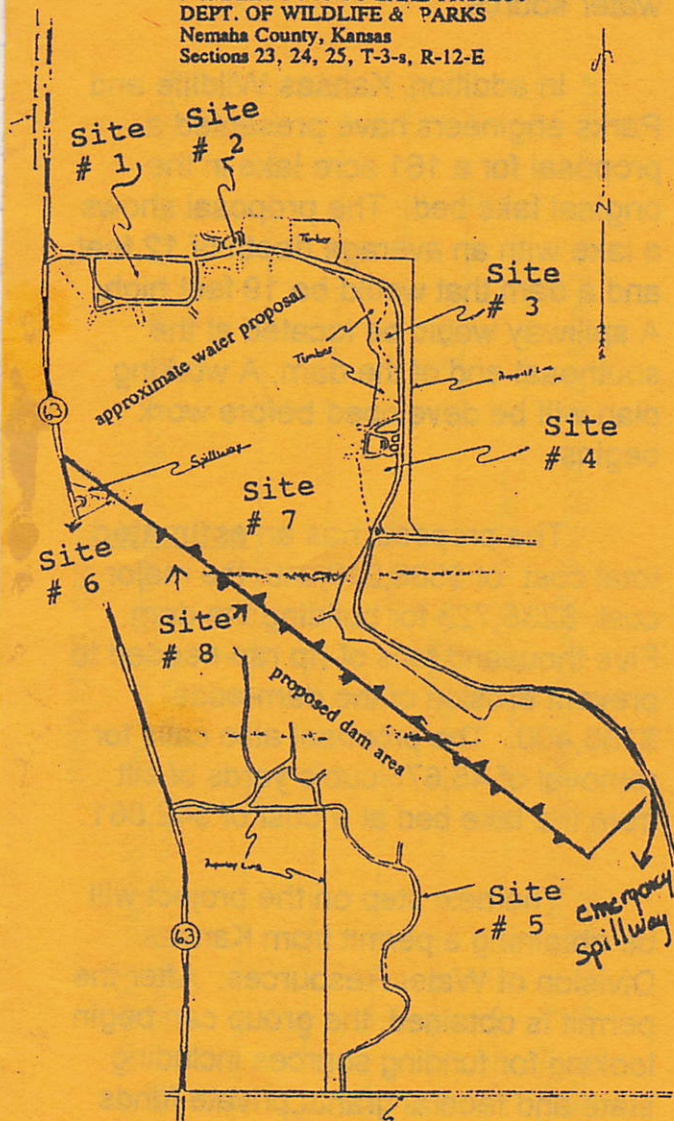
looking for funding sources, including state and federal grants.

Water was tested from two wells that were dug by the CCC camps that built the original lake. The two have a combined flow rate of 54 gallons per minute, and will be used for drinking water and a proposed shower house.

The group is still looking for a larger, 12-inch diameter well that is mentioned in newspaper accounts of the lake's building in the 1930's. Anyone who knows the location of the larger well is asked to contact Heiman or another group member.

The group also discussed plans for this year's fund-raiser, which is set for the first part of October. Last year several thousand dollars was received, Heiman said.

NEMAHA COUNTY LAKE PROJECT
DEPT. OF WILDLIFE & PARKS
Nemaha County, Kansas
Sections 23, 24, 25, T-3-s, R-12-E



ASSOCIATION PROPOSALS

- SITE # 1 - Camping, Picnic Area, Recreation
- # 2 - Picnic Area, Recreation
- # 3 - Camping, Picnic Area
- # 4 - Camping, Picnic Area, Recreation
- # 5 - Scenic Drive
- # 6 - Scenic Viewing, Picnic Area
- # 7 - Approximate Water Proposal
- # 8 - Proposed dam area

Corps could help restore lake

Lake Nemaha association agrees to secure local funding

Efforts by the Lake Nemaha Improvement Association to restore the former fishing lake have received a big boost, with an announcement that the lake is being considered for a new Corps of Engineers program.

The 206 program allows the enhancement or restoration of wetlands on non-federal lands at a 65/35 cost share. According to an article in the *Kansas Wildlife & Parks*, the Nemaha project would

restore 70-100 acres of wetlands at an approximate cost of \$353,000.

The Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks would be responsible for \$123,550 of that cost. The Lake Nemaha Improvement Association currently has \$75,000 available in cash and has agreed to the remaining balance in in-kind services, with assistance from the department.

A preliminary restoration plan has been completed by the Corps of

Engineers and KDWP is waiting for its approval. If approved, the project would be completed within the next year.

The Nemaha State Fishing Lake has been dry since the early 1980's, when the spillway washed out and the department decided that repairs were cost prohibitive. Since that time the lake group has been working to improve the park area and establish some sort of water retention system.

Lake proposals topic of meeting

Wildlife and Parks to host on July 7

Proposals for the re-establishment of a wet lands area at the site of former Lake Nemaha will be unveiled at a public meeting set July 7 at 7:30 PM at the Community Building in Seneca.

The proposals involve deep dredging along the former lake's east and north shores to create an "L" shaped impoundment, County Clerk Anita Heiman told County Commissioners Monday. Heiman is involved with the Lake Nemaha Improvement Association, which has worked for several years to restore the lake and campgrounds.

The public wetlands will hold water throughout the year, but will avoid the Nemaha River channel,

Heiman said.

"We're very happy with it," Heiman said. "We don't think it should upset anyone."

The Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks is sponsoring the meeting, which comes on the heels of an earlier, closed, meeting involving representatives from the Kansas Department of Wildlife & Parks, Natural Resources and Conservation Service, and members of the Lake Nemaha Improvement Association.

The former Nemaha State Fishing Lake has been dry since its spillway washed out in 1984, following a downpour over the lake's watershed.

Former lake topic of meeting

Engineering study identifies options for wetlands area

Ideas for building a public wetlands area at the site of Lake Nemaha will be considered this week, then revealed to the public at a later date.

Results of an engineering study conducted by 3D Construction, based in Knoxville, Tennessee, will be announced to representatives from the Kansas Department of Wildlife & Parks, Natural Resources and Conservation Service, and members of the Lake Nemaha Improvement Association.

"It's a feasibility study to identify different alternatives to build some kind of water retention system and look at cost estimates," said John Bond, public lands supervisor for KDW&P.

The meeting won't be open to the public, but once the best alternatives are selected they will be presented at an open meeting in Seneca, where public input will be sought, Bond said.

The former Nemaha State Fishing Lake has been dry since its spillway washed out in 1984, following a downpour over the lake's watershed.

KDW&P announced last year that it had applied for funding through the Corps of Engineers 206 program, which allows for enhancement or restoration of wetlands on non-federal lands at a cost share of 65/35.

The Lake Nemaha Improvement Association — a group of area

residents who have worked at restoring the site — has agreed to come up with some of the funding, through cash and in-kind services.

Depending on the results of the feasibility study, work could take place yet this year, said Bond.

If so, it would mark the third time water has been retained in the lake bed, which was completed in 1939 after county voters agreed in 1934 to a bond levy to fund a memorial park dedicated to the Spanish American War and World War I.

The lake was drained in 1964, following complaints about silting and the filing of litigation by upstream landowners. It was refilled in 1971.

**Lake Nemaha Improvement Assoc.
will host a**

**Wildlife and Parks informational
meeting concerning development
of Lake Nemaha**

**Wed., July 7 7:30 p.m.
Nemaha County Community Bldg.**

Wetlands area announced

Corps of Engineers program to bring water back to Lake Nemaha

Work to build a permanent fishing habitat and wetlands at the former Lake Nemaha could start by next summer, those attending a meeting at the Community Building on Wednesday were told.

The 149-acre impoundment would be funded through the Section 206 program of the Corps of Engineers, which provides for the enhancement or restoration of wetlands on non-federal lands at a 65/35 cost share.

Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks will maintain control of the area, KDWP public lands supervisor John Bond said. Also speaking were the Corps of Engineers project manager for the Kansas City district, Valerie Hansen, and Bruce Bauer, a representative of BHE Environmental, a private company which performed envi-

ronmental and hydrological analysis at the site.

Representatives of those groups, plus local representation of the Lake Nemaha Improvement Association, considered six alternatives for restoring a wetlands at the site, Bond said.

The one chosen is the best, but is also the most expensive, at an estimated \$345,000. That figure represents the maximum possible cost, he said, and would probably be lower when a final design is completed. KDWP's cost share of approximately \$150,000 would come from the value of the land at the site, Bond said.

A 6,060' berm would be built along the north side of the Nemaha River, containing water from drainages to the north and east. To build the berm 185,000 cubic yards

of dirt would be removed from the lake bed near the existing shelter house and docks, creating a deep-water fishing area that is easily accessible.

Depth across the remainder of the impoundment would vary, and the possibility of creating islands and other wetlands habitat will be looked at, Bond said.

Benefits include good habitat diversity with a fishery and wetlands area, accessible location and good size, and an extended life, estimated at 200 years.

The Nemaha River would not be affected by the berm during normal flow. Some at the meeting questioned whether the proposal would decrease the current site's flood-holding capacity.

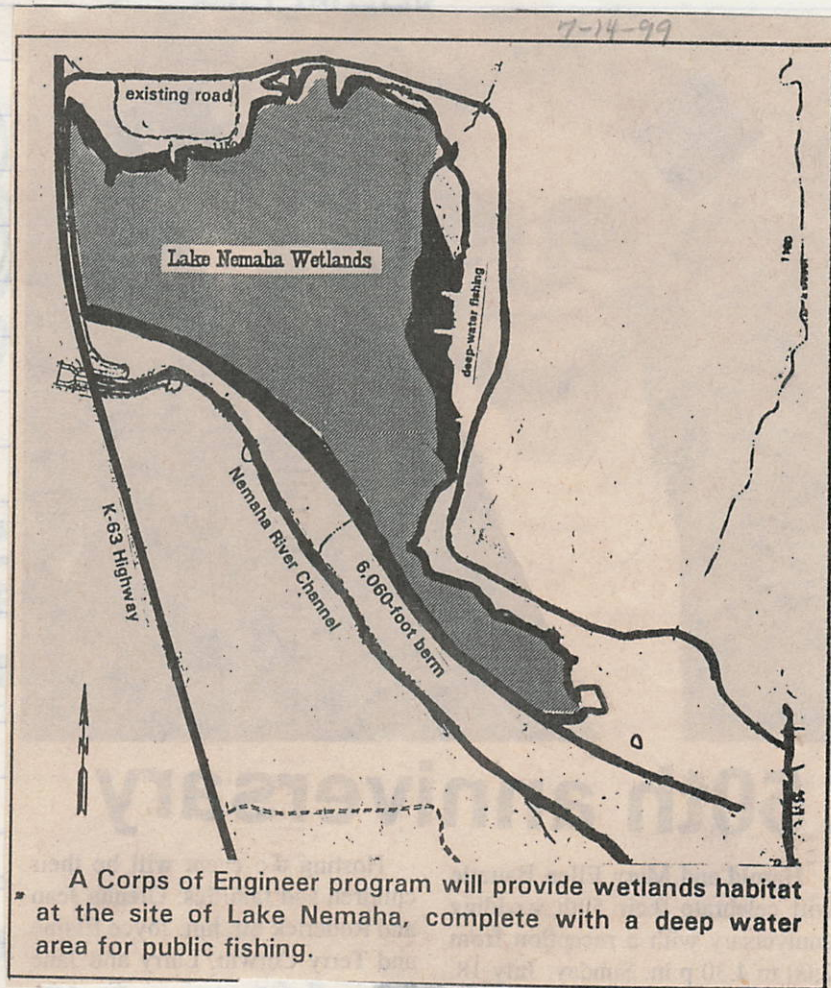
A concrete weir system restricts the amount of water which can

flow through the river. During floods water backs up in the former lake bed. The weir was built after a flood washed out the spillway in 1984, draining the lake.

Flood waters backed up by the weir will go over the berm and fill the wetlands, Bond said, offering a slight improvement in flood control. But the project's main goal is wetlands restoration, he stressed.

The weir was studied to determine if it could be retrofitted to retain a continuous body of water but those plans were rejected because of concerns about loss of flood protection and the possibility of damage to the weir and spillway structure.

Plans and specifications for the project could be finished by December, and bids for work sought by spring.



8-30-00

Funding sought for Nemaha Wetlands

Political pressures have held up Army Corps of Engineers funding for construction of a berm that would create a wetlands area, members of the Lake Nemaha Improvement Association told Senator Sam Brownback, (Republican, Kansas) during a public meeting at the Seneca Library last Friday.

Engineering work has been completed on the project, association member and County Clerk Anita Heiman told Brownback. She asked for his assistance in restoring funding for the project.

Proposed is a berm, which would retain water in the former Lake Nemaha to create a deep-water fishing area and shallow wetlands. The berm would not affect flow of the Nemaha River.

County Commissioners meeting—

Meal program sees increase

Nemaha County's meal program for senior citizens is outgrowing its kitchen, Aging Services Director Fern Odum told County Commissioners on Monday.

Attendance is growing and the meal program is now serving close to 80 noon meals per day through its Nutrition Center and Meals on Wheels program, Odum said. Meals are prepared at the Nutrition Center located in the Terrace Heights housing project.

One item being considered to assist in meal preparation is a tilt skillet that will speed up cooking times and free up space used by several smaller skillets. Also, commissioners on Monday toured the kitchen at the Community Building to see if an oven there could be used at the Nutrition Center.

In other business commissioners:

- Agreed to sponsor a grant being sought by Nemaha County Rural Water District No. 1, which serves the northeast part of the county.

Board members Wayne Ede-
man, Dennis Meyer and John
Baumgartner said the district
was seeking the grant to make im-
provements in water flow and vol-
ume to keep up with rising de-
mand.

The grant sought will pay for
materials and some engineering
costs. District patrons will con-
tribute labor including excavation
costs. The amount being sought
isn't yet known.

The county's support of the
grant request shouldn't have any
negative impact on other grant
requests already in place, Scott
Huizenga, Director of Rural De-
velopment Agency of Northeast
Kansas told commissioners.

- Heard from County Clerk Anita Heiman that a check had been received for a proposed gazebo which would be built through donated funds. She will set up a separate account for those donations, she said.

- Heard from Heiman that she

will meet later this month with the Army Corps of Engineers to finalize plans on the Nemaha Wetlands project, to be located at the site of the former Lake Nemaha.

Corp funding is in place and local match funding needs to be finalized, Heiman said. If everything goes well the project could start by August of this year.

Meeting held on Nemaha wildlife area

3-28-01

A proposal to build a wildlife impoundment at the former Lake Nemaha was discussed by a local group that met Friday with representatives of the Army Corps of Engineers and the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks.

County Clerk Anita Heiman, who has spearheaded the Lake Nemaha Improvement Association, said the local group included representatives of the STEP Foundation and the Soil Conservation Service.

Funding is in place for the project once the local match is guaranteed, Heiman said. "We have to guarantee that we're willing to do it so the project will be funded."

The amount of the local match is unknown until bids are solicited, she said, but estimated it will be under \$40,000. It is hoped that local contractors will bid the work at less cost than the Corps estimated, lowering the local match, she said.

The proposal would result in a shallow impoundment in the former lake's bed, establishing a waterfowl area. A permanent fishing area would also be built.

Heiman said restoring some form of impoundment was the first project she tackled when she entered office in 1985. Former Civilian Conservation Corps workers who built the lake and park are concerned about its fate, she said.

County

Commissioners—

County to sponsor Nemaha project

4-11-01

Nemaha County will sponsor the local effort to raise matching funds for a Corps of Engineers project proposed on the grounds of the former Lake Nemaha.

The county will act as a sponsor for fundraising activities, but will not accept any obligation to contribute funds, specified Commissioner Frank Kuckelman, who made the motion to act as a sponsor.

"They have to have somebody sponsor that so it can go ahead and get started," Kuckelman said. His motion passed unanimously.

Sponsorship by the county gives the fund-raising effort more clout with state and federal officials, County Clerk Anita Heiman said.

A public notice printed in the April 9, 2001 issue of *The Topeka Capital-Journal* and in this issue of the *Courier* gives notice that a feasibility report on the planned Lake Nemaha Wetland Restoration Project in Nemaha County, Kansas, is available for inspection by the public.

The report is to be available at the Nemaha County Clerks office and at the Seneca Free Library. It was not available at either office on Monday. A 30-day public review and comment period commenced with publication of the notice. The report is also available from, and written comments can be submitted to the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers office in Kansas City, Missouri.

Lake Nemaha Wetlands proposed

Feasibility report recommends establishing waterfowl habitat

The primary purpose of the proposed Lake Nemaha Wetlands is to create a habitat friendly to waterfowl and other wetland species.

That kind of habitat is rare in this part of Kansas, according to a feasibility report on the project, prepared by BHE Environmental of Knoxville, Tennessee. The report is available for public viewing at the Seneca Library and at the Nemaha County Clerk's office. A thirty-day period for public comment on the project started last week with publication of a notice.

"The wetlands would provide valuable habitat during spring and fall for waterfowl migration seasons" the report states. It would provide resting and feeding areas for Missouri River flyway migrants.

In addition, the project would provide year-round living space for waterfowl species of ducks, mergansers, cormorants, terns, herons, cranes, rails, coots, a variety of frogs, toads, salamanders, turtles and snakes, mammals such as muskrat, beaver and mink, and also terrestrial wildlife species including white tailed deer, turkey, rabbit and squirrel.

The proposed wetlands would be constructed in the dry lakebed

of former Nemaha State Fishing Lake, which was built in 1930's by the Civilian Conservation Corps.

The lake was drained several times because of upstream flooding and siltation problems. It was last drained in 1984 after runoff from a heavy rainfall washed out the spillway. A concrete weir was then placed in the river channel to restrict flow in times of high water.

The wetlands would be created by building a 6,057-foot compacted clay berm along the north side of existing river channel, retaining water from several tributary streams. The Nemaha River would not be impounded by the structure.

A controlled outlet system would facilitate management of water levels for proper plant community development and control. The wetlands would achieve maximum biological output with an average depth of two feet, with one half of the surface area covered with vegetation.

Slightly over eight acres of deepwater habitat suitable for fishing is included in the proposal. The wetlands would total 143.5 acres.

The Kansas Department of Wildlife & Parks would manage

the state-owned wetlands area.

The report also provides interesting information on the geology, climate, soils, hydrology and topography of area.

The Nemaha River's elevation is 1395 feet above sea level at it's start, several miles north near Corning, and the elevation is 1161' at the top of the present weir.

The outlet system would be capable of gravity de-watering the wetlands to an elevation of 1152'. An emergency spillway with a 300-foot channel would safely discharge a 100-year event flood.

A flood hazard analysis indicates the project would not affect hydraulics of the South Fork Big Nemaha River and its flood plain, including a breach analysis of the berm.

The project is in compliance with twenty-one environmental statutes and was coordinated with the State Historical Society's Cultural Resources Department.

Incidental benefits of the project would include its use as an uncommon habitat for educational purposes. Tangible benefits include the economic worth of goods and services purchased by visitors in hunting, fishing, bird watching, picnicking and hiking.

Fundraising Meeting set Wednesday

Anyone interested in the effort to raise funds for the Lake Nemaha Wetlands is invited to attend a meeting set at noon on Wednesday, April 18, at Valentino's in Seneca.

County Clerk Anita Heiman said Monday that representatives of the Lake Nemaha Improvement Association, the STEP Foundation and other groups would be present.

Exactly how much money needs to be collected locally won't be known until bids for the project are received, said Heiman. Still, she has a rough idea from confidential bid documents.

"It's very possible," to raise the required local funds, she said.

A feasibility report released last week estimates the total cost to create the wetlands at \$908,607. The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers has agreed to fund 65% of the cost. The Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks has also agreed to be a cost-sharing sponsor.

Funds for Nemaha wetlands secured by Ryun's action

Recent action in U.S. Congress ensures that funding will be available to create a wetlands area at the Lake Nemaha site.

U. S. Rep. Jim Ryun (R-Kansas) has announced that his inclusion of funding for the Lake Nemaha Wetlands restoration project in Nemaha County has passed the House in the form of a House/Senate Conference Report.

Funding for the project had previously been proposed through money that was left over in the Army Corps of Engineers budget, said Nemaha County Clerk Anita Heiman, who is a member of the Lake Nemaha Association.

When construction will start is uncertain, Heiman said. Bids have been opened, but no action taken, on two phases of construction that will establish a 24-acre wetlands in the former lake bed.

The Corps of Engineers this summer received bids to build a mile-long berm that would retain water for the wetlands, which would have an average depth of eighteen inches to three feet. A borrow area would hold deeper water creating a permanent fish habitat.

Bids for site preparation which were solicited by Nemaha County came in too high, and weren't accepted, Heiman said. Changed specifications are hoped to lead to lower bids. Nemaha County is acting as the local sponsor for the work, but the Lake Nemaha Association will provide the funding, she said.

Lake Nemaha's development began in the 1930s to provide employment for a company of the Civilian Conservation Corps and includes a Memorial Park for the veterans of the Spanish-American War and World War I.

The area was deeded to the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks in 1936 for management. However, the lake was drained in the 60s, refilled in 1971, and damaged and drained by floods in 1984.

"Lake Nemaha was originally built to honor veterans, but it has also given wonderful recreational opportunities for area residents," said Ryun. "I'm pleased that we have been able to secure funding in order to make this project a reality."

Bids for lake work 1-16-02 **to be opened Jan. 31**

A second bid letting has been set for the local portion of a project to build a waterfowl marsh in the Nemaha Wildlife area, the former Lake Nemaha.

Construction on the project is split into two phases, with the US Army Corps of Engineers contracting for construction of a water-retaining berm, while Nemaha County contracts for site preparation.

Bids taken for both phases of the project last year came in too high, and weren't accepted.

The county's portion of the work involves clearing and grubbing the 24-acre site and stripping and stockpiling 37,000 cubic yards of topsoil and fill that will be used in construction of the berm.

Work on the county's portion of the project can begin immediately following award of the contract, said County Clerk Anita Heiman. Bids will be opened in the County Clerk's office at 10 AM on Thursday, January 31.

The Corps of Engineers will take bids on March 1 for construction of the mile-long berm, which will create wetlands habitat with an average depth of eighteen inches to three feet. A borrow area

would create a deeper, permanent fish habitat.

U. S. Rep. Jim Ryun (R-Kansas) announced last November that funding has been secured for the Corps's portion of the work. The local share of the project will be funded by the Lake Nemaha Association.

Nemaha County is acting as the local sponsor for the work, but funding will come from the Lake Nemaha Association, which was formed by the local community in 1984 to find a way to reclaim the site for use by citizens.

Lake Nemaha's development began in the 1930s to provide employment for a company of the Civilian Conservation Corps and includes a Memorial Park for the veterans of the Spanish-American War and World War I.

The area was deeded to the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks in 1936 for management. However, the lake was drained in the 60s, refilled in 1971, and damaged and drained by floods in 1984.

The construction project will provide a number of benefits including improved water quality and flood control.

8-29-01

County Commissioners meeting— **One bid received for lake project**

A Nebraska construction company submitted the only bid received for preliminary work to build a wetlands habitat at the former Lake Nemaha.

County Commissioners on Monday told County Clerk Anita Heiman to start negotiations with Commercial Contracting Equipment of Lincoln, Nebraska. The bid price was not disclosed and no action was taken on the bid.

Commercial Contracting Equipment also submitted the low bid for the US Army Corps of Engineers portion of the project. That bid is also under negotiation.

The county's portion of the work involves clearing and grubbing the 24-acre site and stripping and stockpiling 37,000 cubic yards of topsoil that will be used in construction of a berm.

Construction of the over-one-mile-long berm is the responsibility of the Corps. A shallow wetlands will be created, along with a deeper area that will permanently hold water.

No tax dollars will be used to fund the county's portion of the

project, Heiman said. The county signed on to guarantee the project match, but funding will be raised privately.

In other business commissioners:

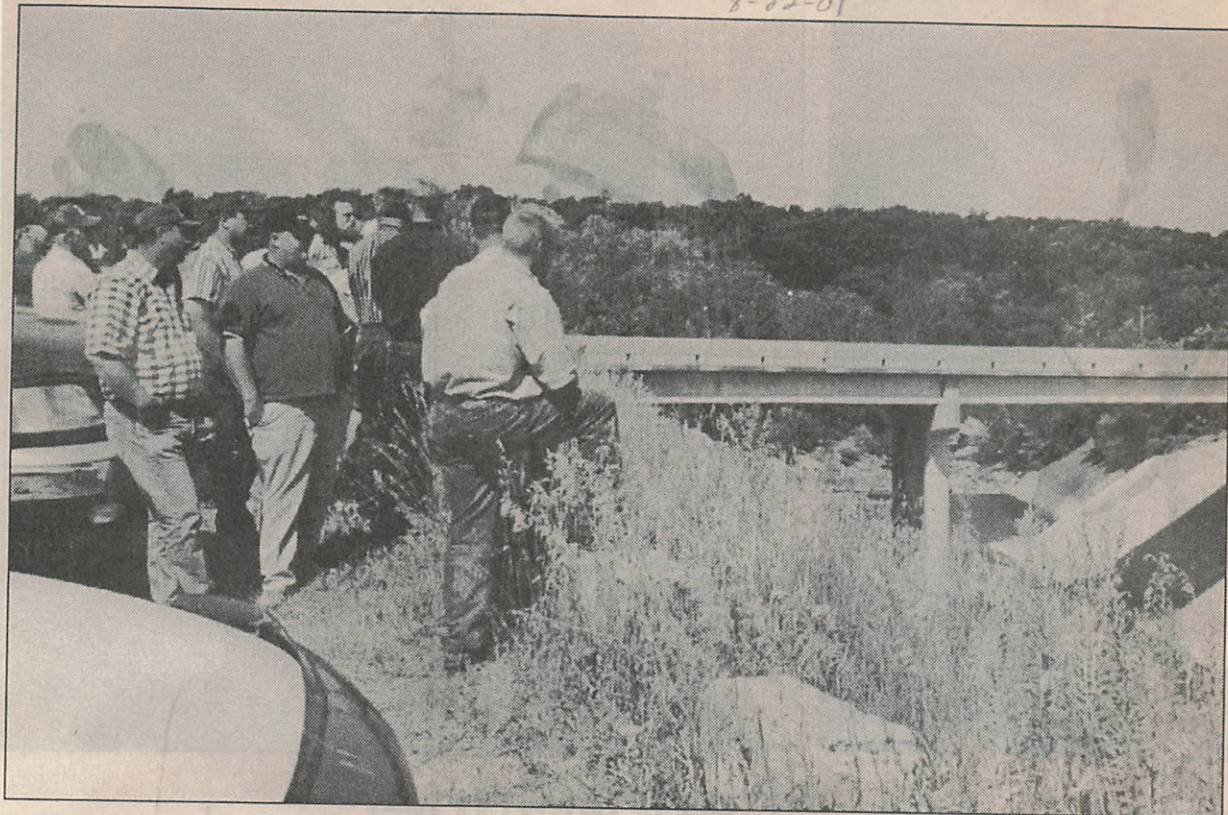
- Approved resolutions that specify custodians of open records and set copying fees.

The resolution appointed the following officers as official custodian of public records contained in that office: County Treasurer, Sheriff, County Appraiser, County Attorney, County Highway Administrator, Register of Deeds, Noxious Weeds Director, Emergency Preparedness Director, County Landfill Supervisor and Senior Services Director. The County Clerk is responsible for all public records kept and maintained by the County Clerk's office, and all other public records not otherwise provided for.

Each of the official custodians can appoint another employee to serve as custodian.

Copying fees are 25 cents for a letter size document and higher for larger documents.

8-22-01



Representatives of construction firms interested in bidding on the project to build a wetlands view the site at the former Lake Nemaha, four miles south of Seneca.

Bidders look at Nemaha Wetlands

Major work on a project to establish wetlands in the former Lake Nemaha probably won't get started until next spring, but work on a smaller portion of the project could get underway this fall.

Construction on the project is split into two phases. The US Army Corps of Engineers will contract for construction of a berm to hold water in the former lake. Nemaha County will contract for site preparation through the Kansas Department of Wildlife & Parks, the project sponsor.

Representatives of firms interested in the project met with Corps officials last Tuesday at the Nemaha County Courthouse and later toured the lake site.

The project is basically a big, earth-fill embankment, said proj-

ect engineer Shawn Higley. "There's really nothing I can think of from an engineering standpoint that would cause any problems," Higley told the contractors.

Dirt left over from construction of the over-one-mile-long berm will be used to create mini islands in the wetlands, which will have an average depth of 18" to 3 feet. Deeper water will be held in a borrow area. Trees and brush will only be removed from the area that is directly affected by construction, said project manager Valeria Hansen, a biologist with the Corps.

The county's portion of the work involves clearing and grubbing the 24-acre site and stripping and stockpiling 37,000 cubic yards of topsoil that will be used in con-

struction of the berm.

Bids will be opened in the County Clerk's office at 10 AM on August 27.

The Corp opened bids for its portion of the project last Friday, and is now in negotiations with the low bidder, a Lincoln, Nebraska company.

Contractors will receive 180 days to complete the Corps portion of the project, but won't be able to start until the contractor hired by the county is done. There may not be enough time to start work this fall before cold weather stops construction.

It is possible for work to start this fall, especially if the same contractor gets both jobs and can ensure completion of the first portion.

County Commissioners meeting— 2-13-2002

Low bid gets Nemaha lake work

The low bidder was selected Monday to do initial dirt work for construction of a wetlands habitat at the former Lake Nemaha.

A bid of \$51,000 from Gary Sunneberg of Lincoln, Nebraska was accepted by Nemaha County Commissioners, who acted on the recommendation of County Clerk Anita Heiman.

Six bids ranging from \$51,000 to \$187,000 were opened last week. The wide disparity led commissioners to ask that bidders' references be checked.

Heiman represented the Lake Nemaha Improvement Association, which will fund the local portion of the project. She told commissioners that Sunneberg has good references and is eager to get the job.

"I have heard nothing but good about the man," Heiman said.

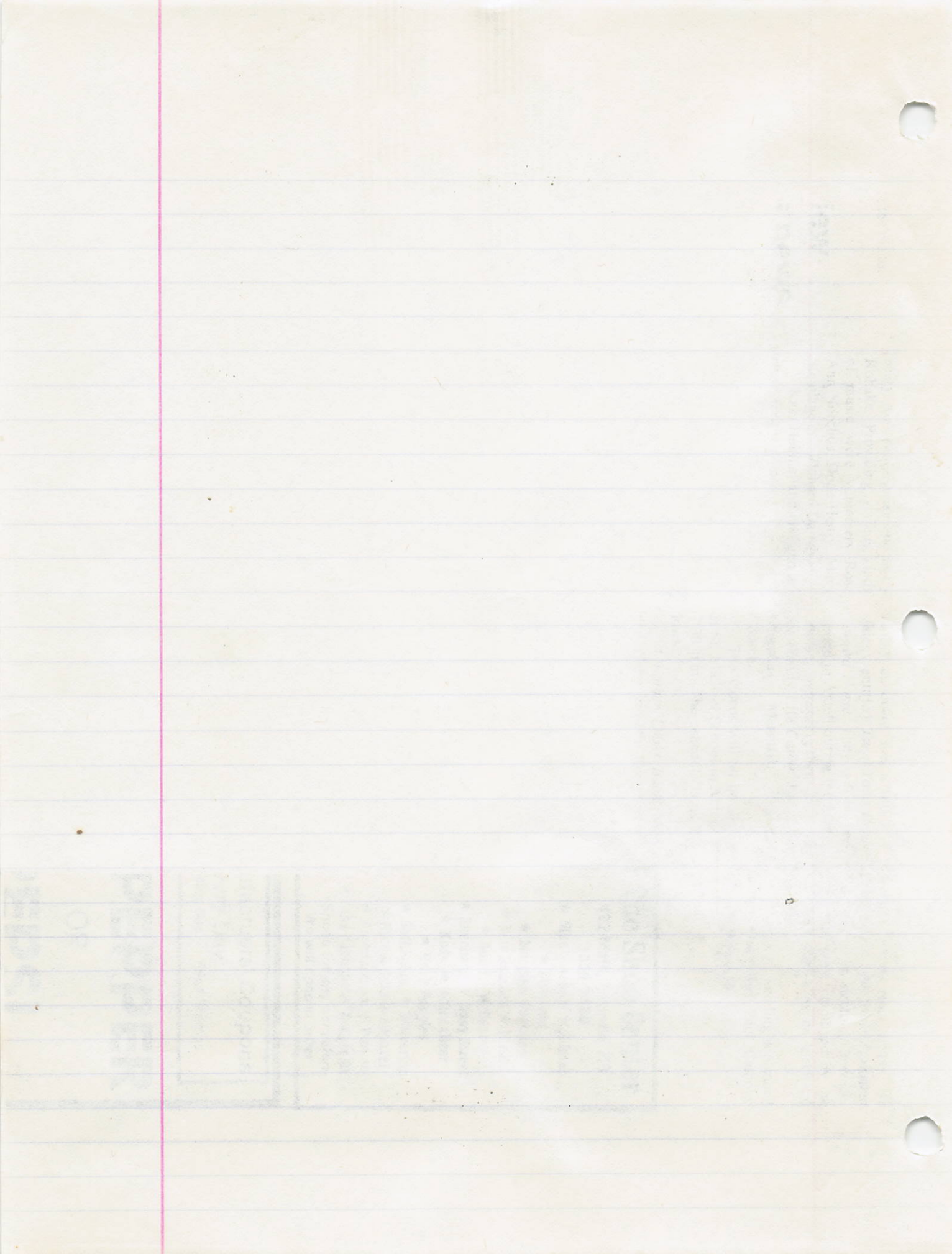
Sunneberg will start work as soon as the site is staked by the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks.

The local portion of the project involves clearing trees and stockpiling soil in preparation for work by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers to build a mile-long berm that will impound water in the former lake bed, creating a 143.5 acre wetlands habitat.

The lake, built in the 1930's by the Civilian Conservation Corps, was drained in the 60s, refilled in 1971, and damaged and drained by

floods in 1984. After 1984, the local community formed the Lake Nemaha Association.

The Lake Nemaha Improvement Association will soon start a fundraising campaign, Heiman said.





Almost ready for water—

Equipment operator Mark Sunneberg cleared trees out of the bed of the former Lake Nemaha on Friday. Behind Sunneberg is the rock fishing pier that was located west of the shelter house. Contractor Gary Sunneberg said work is one-half finished on the first phase of the project to build a

143.5 acre wetlands habitat. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is to open bids on Wednesday for the second phase of the project, which will involve construction of a mile-long berm.

4-24-02

Bids opened for Phase two work at Lake Nemaha

A construction firm from Arkansas appears to be the low bidder on the second phase of a project to build a wetlands wildlife habitat at the former Lake Nemaha.

A bid from Lost Valley, Inc., Hot Springs, Arkansas, of \$570,954 was opened by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, which is funding the remainder of the work. Bids were opened on March 27.

Phase two work includes building a mile-long berm that will impound water in the former lake bed, creating a 143.5 acre wetlands habitat.

Trees and overlying soil were stripped in Phase one of the proj-

ect, which was completed earlier this year by Gary Sunneberg, Lincoln, Nebraska. He was paid \$51,000 by the county, which will be reimbursed by the Lake Nemaha Improvement Association.

The Lake Nemaha Improvement Association will soon start a fundraising campaign, said County Clerk Anita Heiman, who heads the group.

The lake, built in the 1930's by the Civilian Conservation Corps, was drained in the 60s, refilled in 1971, and damaged and drained by floods in 1984. After 1984, the local community formed the Lake Nemaha Association.



A pre-construction meeting was held Friday afternoon for parties involved in the second phase of work at the former Lake Nemaha. From left are: Val Hansen, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers representative, Shawn Higley, project designer, John Craemer, Corps of Engineers, Keith Salmans, Kansas Wildlife and Parks, Bill Woodyard and Ron Baughman, Lost Valley Construction.

Work starts on phase two of Lake Nemaha Wetlands

Prime rib dinner, auction set July 11 to raise funds

Dirt is being moved for construction of the Lake Nemaha Wetlands. Lost Valley Construction, Inc., Hot Springs, Arkansas, started work last week on the project, which is expected to be done in four months.

The \$570,954 second phase of the project will impound water at varying depths in a portion of the former Lake Nemaha through construction of a mile-long berm. The Nemaha River won't be affected by the project.

The US Army Corps of Engineers is underwriting the project through its Section 206 program, which seeks to restore wetlands habitat.

The local share of the project's cost is being raised by the Lake Nemaha Wetlands Association. Organizers anticipate raising \$21,000 by hosting a benefit dinner, raffle and auction. The prime

rib dinner is set July 11 at the Knights of Columbus Hall. Tickets are \$50 per plate, said Bill Brannan, a member of the Lake Nemaha Wetlands Association.

"We want to make the lake area accessible and usable to everyone, like it used to be," Brannan said.

There is a good chance that Ducks Unlimited will give \$15,000 to \$20,000 to the project, Brannan said.

And, local lumberyards and tradesmen have agreed to build, equip and install a "potters shed", an attractive workshop or garden shed that will be given away as a fundraiser.

In all, \$51,000 needs to be raised to pay the local share of the project's cost. Funds are being held in an account kept by the STEP Foundation and donations can be tax deductible. If additional funds are raised they will be used

for improvements on the grounds.

Besides offering a permanent fishing area that will be stocked with channel catfish, bass and bluegill, the project will create a marsh-type setting that is lacking in this part of the state, said Keith Salmans of the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, which owns the grounds.

"It will attract waterfowl and shore birds and serve as a refueling area for migrating birds," Salmans said.

The Section 206 program was authorized by Congress in 1996, said Val Hansen, project manager for the Corps of Engineers. Lake Nemaha Wetlands is the first to be built under the Section 206 program by the Kansas City District, she said.

"It's a real good fit, with a combination of wetlands and deepwater habitat," Hansen said.



Lake Nemaha Improvement chairman Anita Heiman (center) recently received donations totaling \$28,500 to help pay for the Lake Nemaha Wetlands. From left are Lynn Heiman and Paul Boeding of the Baileyville

State Bank, Merlin Deters and Dan Koch of Koch and Company, Val Schmitz and Tom Schmitz of Ducks Unlimited and Larry Kuckelman from Gold Bank.

Lake fundraiser set July 11

Almost half of the amount needed to pay for the local share of the Lake Nemaha Wetlands has already been donated, project sponsors announced last week.

Now it's time for the community to support the lake, through a fundraising dinner set Thursday, July 11. With good participation the debt can be cleared.

"I'd like to get the whole project paid for in one evening," said Bill Brannan of the Lake Nemaha Improvement Association.

A prime rib dinner with all the fixin's — drinks included — will be served at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Seneca. Tickets, which are \$50, can be purchased by contacting Brannan at Schendel Pest Control, or County Clerk Anita Heiman, who is chairman of the asso-

ciation. Reservations need to be made as soon as possible, they said.

\$51,000 is needed to pay the local share of the project, which will create a wetlands habitat and permanent fishing area in the bed of the former Lake Nemaha. Donations that have been received to date include \$20,000 from Ducks Unlimited, \$6,000 from Gold Bank, \$2,000 from Koch and Company and \$500 from the Baileyville State Bank.

Around thirty items, including wildlife prints and carvings, taxidermy services and guided fishing trips will be sold by auction following the dinner. Some of the auction items are being sponsored by local organizations and businesses, including Gene's Boot Shop, Seneca Lions Club, Janes, Young Backhoe, Schen-

del Pest Control and Miller-Heiman Construction.

Also at the dinner, a name will be drawn to pick the winner of an 8 by 12 garden shed. Materials were donated by Koelzer Lumber, Suther Building Supplies and Stallbaumer Lumber, and labor has been donated by local contractors including Love Construction, Miller-Heiman Construction, Joe's Electric, Seneca Ready Mix and AHRs Construction.

The State of Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks has donated a buffalo that will be culled from its herd in November. What kind of animal you receive — bull, cow or calf — will depend on the auction bid, Brannan said.

Future plans for the site include restoration of the existing shelter house and construction

of foot-paths and trails that will help make the wetlands area more accessible, Heiman said. Also the group wants to restore the stone cairns on the former lake's dam and have them added to the state's historic register. The cairns remain from the lake's construction by Civilian Conservation Corps workers in the 1930's, she said.

Construction of the lake was originally funded by a \$30,000 bond issue passed by Nemaha County voters in March, 1934.

Work is now underway by Lost Valley Construction, Hot Springs, Ark., low bidder at \$570,954, to build a mile-plus berm that will hold water back without affecting the Nemaha River. The project is sponsored by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers through its Section 206 program, which seeks to restore wetlands habitat.



A crew from Lost Valley Construction placed rock in a pit lined with plastic last week. The company is building a mile-plus berm that will impound water in the Lake Nemaha Wetlands.

Lake fundraiser is Thursday

Tickets remain available for the dinner set Thursday night to raise funds for the Lake Nemaha Wetlands.

"We need help," said Bill Brannan of the Lake Nemaha Improvement Association, which is raising \$51,000 to pay

the local share of the over \$600,000 project.

The prime-rib dinner will be served at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Seneca. Dinner and drinks are \$50, and tickets are available at Schendel Pest Control and from County Clerk

Anita Heiman.

A garden shed that will be given away in a raffle that night is now on display at Conoco.

Community National Bank recently made a \$1,000 donation to the project, Brannan said.

10-23-02

Keep off berm at Nemaha Wetlands

The public is asked to refrain from driving on the dirt berm recently built in the Lake Nemaha Wetlands Area.

The berm, which is over one mile long, has not been seeded and can be damaged if it is subject to traffic, especially by motorcycles and all terrain vehicles.

The Kansas Department of Wildlife & Parks (KDWP) and local volunteers are patrolling the site to enforce the no-driving ban.

Dirt-moving contractor Lost Valley Construction has finished its part of the project,

which has a total cost of over \$600,000. KDWP is responsible for seeding the berm to establish a protective vegetation cover.

The majority of funding was provided by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers through its Section 206 program, which seeks to restore wetlands habitat. Locally, \$51,000 was raised to help pay for the project.

Wetlands with a depth varying from several inches to several feet and a deep-water fishing area will be retained in the 144 acre impoundment.



1-30-08

Limestone pillars that form a guardrail on the Lake Nemaha dam are shown in this photograph that is part of the application

PHOTO BY DARL ANN RIAL
for nomination of the National Register of Historic Places. The pillars were built in the late 1930's.

Pillars considered for register

Recognition could help preserve, protect K-63 Hwy. landmarks

Limestone pillars that line K-63 Highway as it crosses the former Lake Nemaha dam will be considered for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places and Register of Historic Kansas Places.

Built by Civilian Conservation Corps workers in the late 1930's, the pillars represent a time in history when the county came together during terrible economic times to build Lake Nemaha, said Darl Ann Rial, president of the Nemaha County Historical Society.

Rial said she began work on the application about two years ago, after receiving a request from the Lake Nemaha Improvement Association, which is interested in pre-

serving the remaining pillars. Over two hundred line both sides of the highway. Some were lost when a new bridge was built over the Nemaha River in 1984. Others have been rebuilt because of deterioration of after suffering damage from vehicle accidents

"They don't want to lose any more. It's a preservation of a time in history," Rial said.

State historical society advisors encouraged the application to include the site of the camps and other facilities built and used by the CCC workers during the project but they weren't able to get enough documentation to include it in this application.

Stone for the pillars came from a quarry located near Corning. Most of the work on the project was done by manual labor. CCC worker's attention to detail is revealed in the height of the cement-capped pillars, Rial said.

"You can see how absolutely level they are right across the top, despite the varying ground level," she said.

The Lake Nemaha Dam Guardrail is being nominated as part of the "New Deal-era Resources of Kansas" said Kristen Johnstone at the State Historic Preservation Office. "They tie in with other sites across the state that date from the same time and have the same context,"

she said.

The Kansas Historic Sites Board of Review will consider the nomination at their next meeting on February 23. The meeting will begin at 9 am in the Museum Classrooms at the Kansas History Center in Topeka.

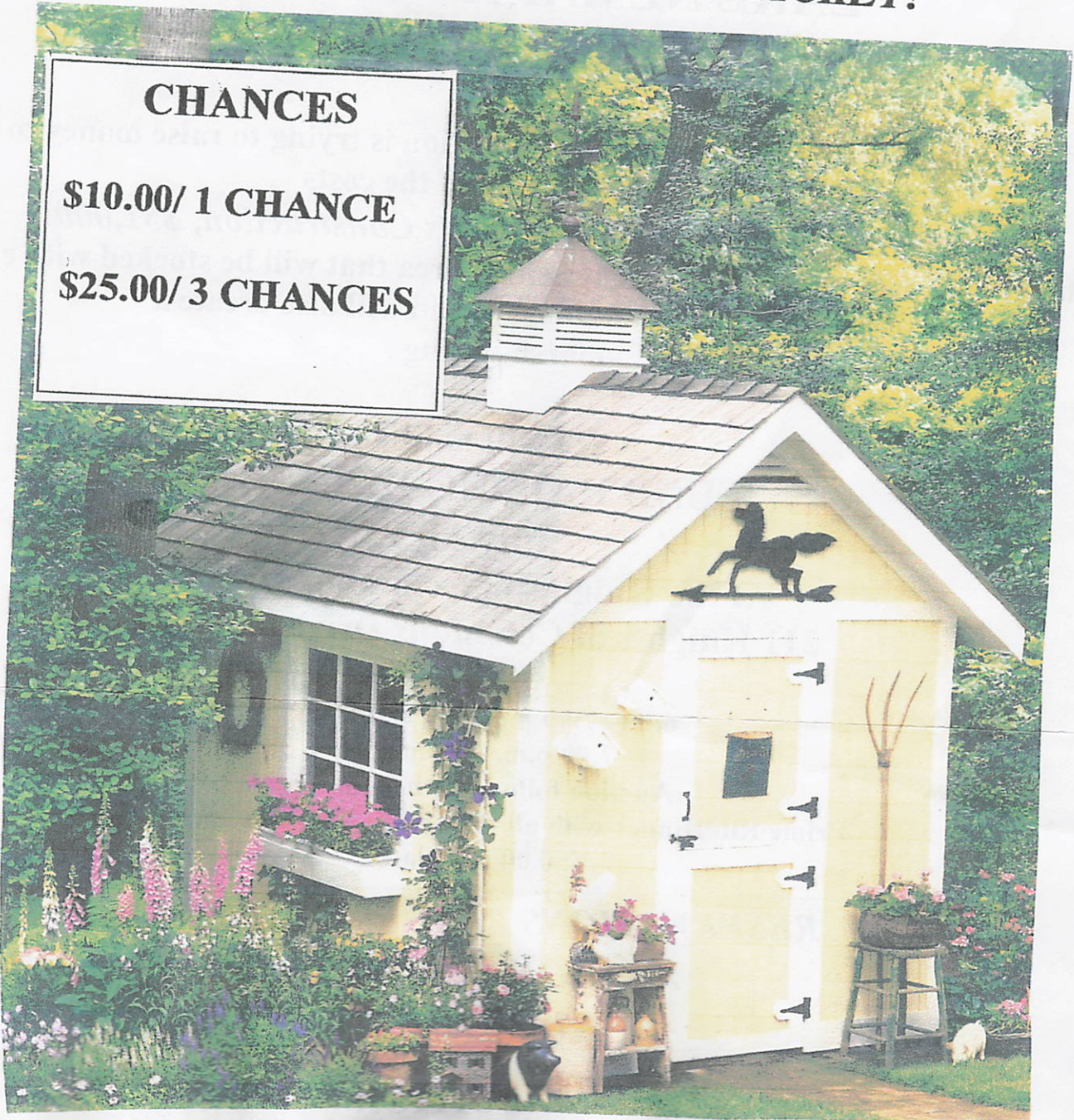
The pillars, or stone guardrail as they are referred to in the application, are under the jurisdiction of the Kansas Department of Transportation because they are on the highway right-of-way. KDOT has no plans to file adverse comments to the nomination, Scott Vogel, in the Division of Environmental Services, said on Friday.

PLEASE HELP US - BUY A TICKET!

CHANCES

\$10.00/ 1 CHANCE

\$25.00/ 3 CHANCES



FOR TICKETS CONTACT:

Anita Heiman, Nemaha County Courthouse , 785 336-2170

Bill Brannan, Schendel Pest Control, 785 336-3241

Sheds approximately 8 x 12 feet
Concrete pad is included and we will move it to your property
over a 1/2 mile radius from Seneca, then concrete pad and
your responsibility)

LAKE NEMAHA WETLANDS NEEDS YOUR HELP !

The Lake Nemaha Improvement Association is trying to raise money to help
fund our share of the costs

For the Lake Nemaha Wetlands Construction, \$51,000

The project will offer a permanent fishing area that will be stocked with channel
catfish, bass and bluegill and will also create a
marsh setting .

We will hold a
FUND RAISING DINNER

July 11, 2002

At the Knights of Columbus Hall,
211 Knights of Columbus Drive, Seneca

6:00 -7:00 p.m. - Social Hour

7:00 p.m. - Dinner -

Auction following the Dinner

Prime Rib Dinner with all the Fixin's - Drinks Included
\$50.00 per plate

**RESERVATIONS REQUESTED PLEASE
AS SOON AS POSSIBLE**

785 336-3241

**** IN ADDITION ****

We are selling raffle chances on an 8 x 12 Potting Shed
Picture and Information on Back Side of this sheet

For Dinner or Potting Shed Tickets Contact:

Anita Heiman - Nemaha County Courthouse 785 336-2170

Bill and Linda Brannan, Schendel Pest Control 785 336-3241
or 785 336-3489 evenings

ALL DONATIONS ACCEPTED !!

Thank you for your help!

Lake donations close to goal

Over \$46,000 has been raised to help pay for the project to build a wetlands and fishing area in the former Lake Nemaha.

Around \$12,000 was raised last week in a dinner, raffle and auction. "We came out well," said Bill Brannan, an organizer of the fundraiser and member of the Lake Nemaha Improve-

ment Association.

Around one hundred lake supporters attended the dinner. Others purchased tickets to support the project, but didn't attend. The auction raised \$5,550 and a silent auction raised another \$573. The raffled netted \$495.

For those attending, the \$50-a-ticket-dinner was a way to

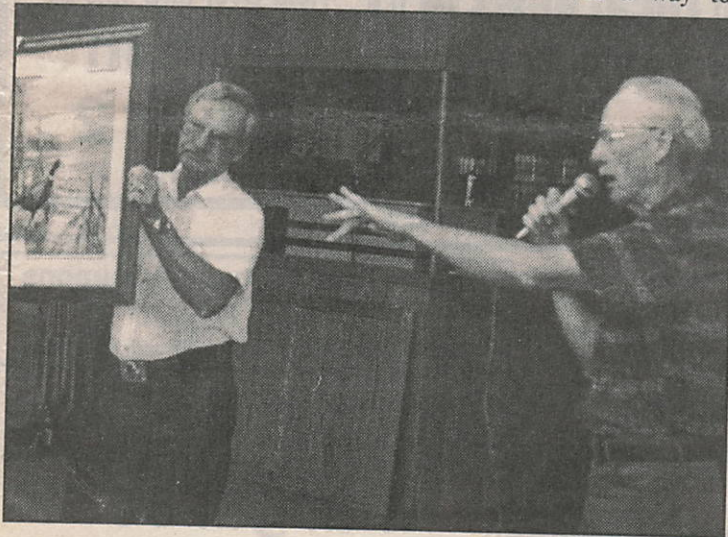
support the lake project. "I'm glad to see something being done with it," said Gladys Deters, Baileyville, who attended with her husband, LeRoy. She grew up near the lake and has fond memories of family outings.

Several more donations were announced at the dinner. Popkess Mortuary has donated \$2,500, Community National Bank has donated \$1,000, and Lauer Funeral Home donated \$500.

An oak table and chairs brought in over \$1,100 after it was won by Brannan in a raffle, donated back and sold at auction.

The raffle for a garden shed raised \$3,910. It was also won by Brannan, who said he purchased \$50 of tickets for each of the raffles.

The association needs to raise \$51,000 to pay the community's share of the project, which has a total cost of over \$600,000. The majority of funding is from the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers.



Auctioneer Jim Boeding took bids on a wildlife print carried by Eldon Schwant during the dinner to raise funds for the Lake Nemaha Wetlands.

4-9-03



Over one inch of rain was recorded across most of the county over the weekend. There was little runoff, but water is starting to accumulate in the Lake Nemaha Wetland Area. Shown is the area that will hold d water year-around. Water depth will vary in the rest site, depending on rainfall and habitat requirements.

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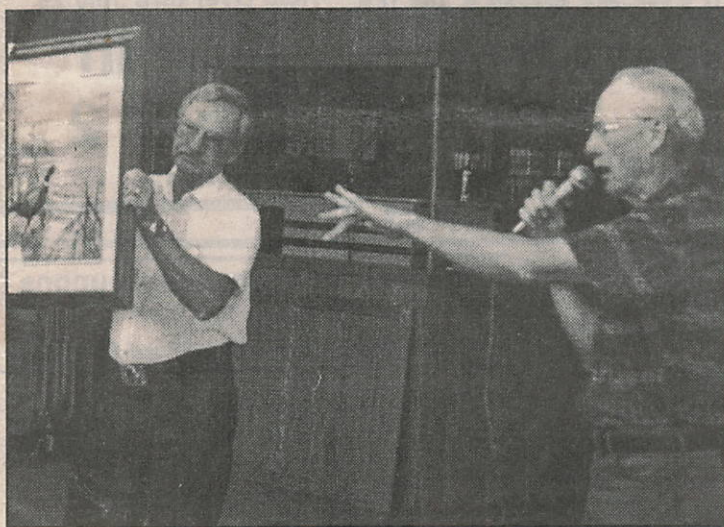
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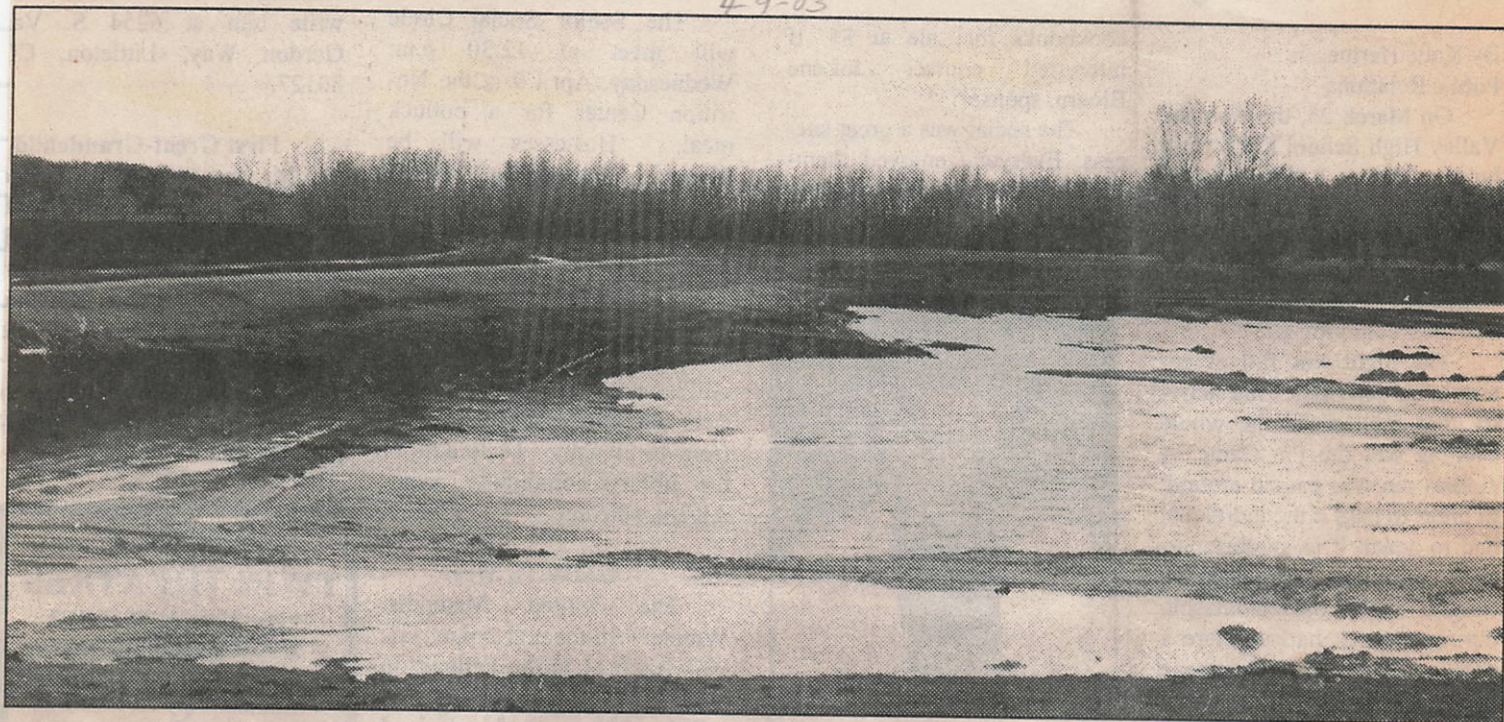
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Jan. 28, 2004



Still standing at the entrance to the former Lake Nemaha is this rock and cement monument. The photo is one of over 200 that have been posted on the Internet.

Lake Nemaha CCC camp photographs available on Internet

Over two hundred photos from an album about the Civilian Conservation Camp at Lake Nemaha are available over the Internet.

The photos are from an album purchased on E-Bay by Wetmore native Roger Goodman, who currently lives in Springfield, Virginia.

Mostly black and white, the collection depicts life in the camp, which built Lake Nemaha in the 1930's. Some show groups of men dressed alike at work on the lake, or playing baseball and volleyball

in their off time. Others show individual portraits.

Barracks, mess halls and other structures that were located in the CCC camp are visible in some of the photos.

Most of the photos are without a caption, and Goodman writes that he would appreciate help from anyone who can identify the people and locations shown. View the photos at:

<http://freepages.history.rootsweb.com/~nemahaks/CCC/> An e-mail address for Goodman is listed at the site.



Lake Nemaha

Construction of a wildlife habitat that will hold water in old Lake Nemaha moved a step closer Monday, after a second round of bids were opened for the local portion of the project.

The first bid letting, held last September, attracted just one bid, of close to \$200,000, but this time three contractors submitted bids that were less than \$66,000.

"I feel very confident that this is a project we can afford," said Anita Heiman, representative of the Lake Nemaha Improvement Association, which has pledged to raise funds for the local project.

County Commissioners on Monday morning opened bids received from six contractors: Gary Sunneberg Lincoln, Nebraska - \$51,000; Phil Moser, Sabetha, \$62,965; Spoo, Frankfort, \$149,000; Ohlsen Backhoe, Seneca, \$120,000; Brahma Excavating, Holton \$62,532; and Commercial Contractors Equip. Inc., Lincoln, Nebraska, \$187,000.

Because of the wide disparity in bids, County Attorney Brad Lippert and Wildlife and Parks officials will be asked to review the bids and check references before a decision is made next Monday.

Sunneburg, the low bidder, attended the bid opening. He went over the site last week with Kansas Wildlife & Parks officials and confirmed that the contractor will be allowed to pile trees for burning on site, and to leave dirt in several piles.

"I feel good about it," Sunneburg told commissioners about his bid.

Bids were to have been opened on Thursday, but the opening was delayed to Monday's meeting after the Courthouse was closed Thursday due to the snowstorm.

The local portion of the project involves clearing trees and stockpiling soil in preparation for work the U. S. Army Corps of Engi-

neers is taking bids on, to build a mile-long berm that will impound water in the former lake bed, creating a 143.5 acre wetlands habitat.

Lake Nemaha's development began in the 1930s to provide employment for a company of the Civilian Conservation Corps. The lake was drained in the 60s, refilled in 1971, and damaged and drained by floods in 1984. After 1984, the local community formed the Lake Nemaha Association.

The Lake Nemaha Improvement Association will soon start a fundraising campaign, Heiman said. The group is affiliated with the STEP Foundation.

In other business commissioners:

- Opened bids that were received for steel to be used in construction of bridges this year. Bids that were accepted were: H-piling, \$26,222, Ogden Enterprise; sheet piling, \$45,379 Welborn Sales; miscellaneous steel, \$17,413, Midwest Sales.

The bids for H-piling and miscellaneous steel were the lowest received. Husker Steel submitted a bid about \$3,600 lower than Welborn Sales for sheet piling, but commissioners accepted Bridge Foreman Dennis Ronnebaum's recommendation to use the wider product bid by Welborn Sales because it is preferred by the bridge crew.

- Discussed plans to meet next Monday with department heads at scattered times to discuss where they are on their budget and other concerns.

- Reviewed the annual Noxious Weed Eradication Progress Report submitted by Noxious Weed Director Todd Swart. The county has 93,750 acres that are infested with noxious weeds. Musk thistle is the most numerous, found in 32,046 acres, followed by Field bindweed, 30,624 acres, and Sericea Lespedeza, 27,347 acres.